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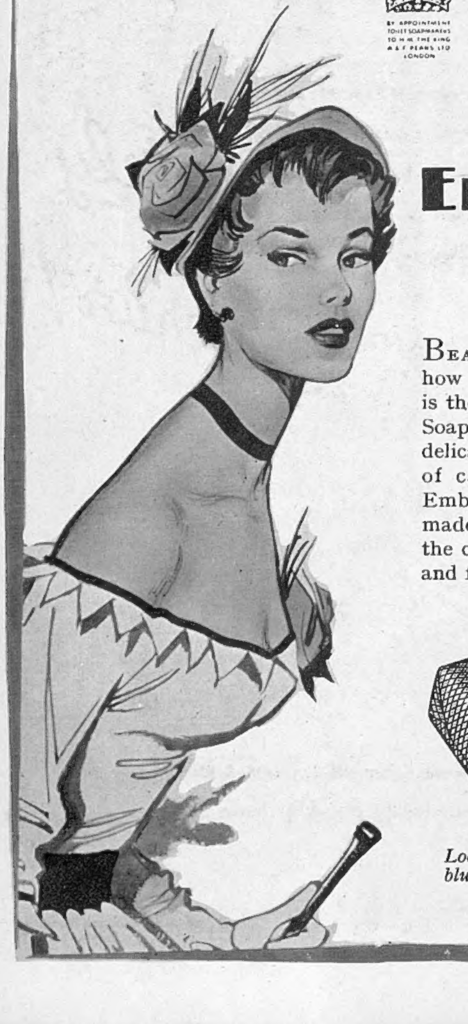

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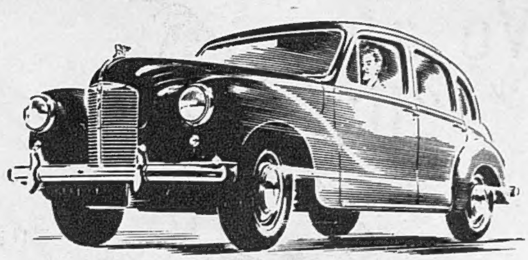

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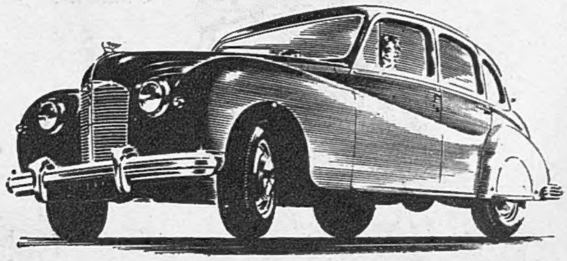

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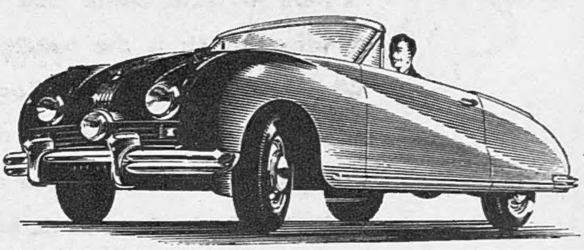

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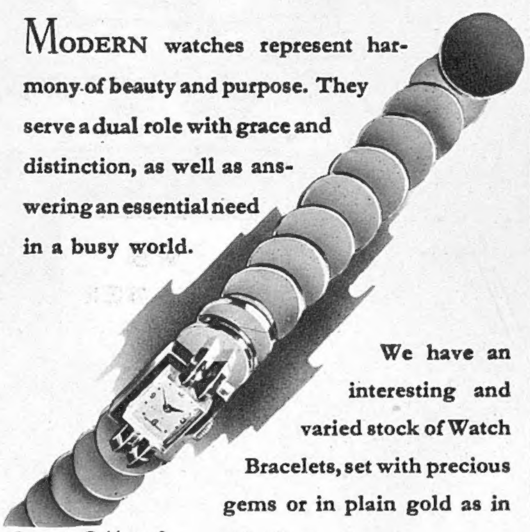

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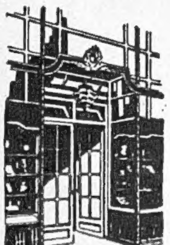

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The Sketch
WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 1950

Photographed by CURTIS REEKS.

DISTINCTIVE

ITALIAN-BORN Valentina Cortese co-stars with Richard Greene in Anthony Havelock-Allan's new film, *Shadow of the Eagle*, shortly to be pre-released in seaside resorts, and probably due in the West End next month.

On Gold Cup Day at Royal Ascot their Majesties drove down the course to the Royal Enclosure. With the King and Queen were the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Beaufort.

Sketch-Book

BEVERLEY BAXTER

ONE day during Ascot Mr. Churchill journeyed to that fashionable spot to see his horse *Colonist II.* engage other animals in a test of speed and endurance. On the way there he had a minor motor-car smash which hit the headlines rather harder than the cars hit each other—but it was an accident. After the race he returned to Westminster and rejoined his embattled forces, who were engaged in a long-drawn-out struggle with the Socialists. At two o'clock in the morning he was still on the Front Bench prodding the enemy, encouraging his own men, and exuding vitality in all directions.

Now there is no moral to this except to remind ourselves that Mr. Churchill is seventy-five years of age, and I suggest for a moment that we engage our thoughts with that winter of life that comes to all of us providing that we last the course.

Poets and philosophers through the ages have dealt with this subject, and as usual have sharply disagreed with each other. Browning, who was a cheery fellow, wrote those invigorating lines: *Grow old with me! The best is yet to be.* But Francis Bacon, looking back upon a life of great achievement but moral failure, declared that men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little and repent too soon.

I find much pleasure in Sir Thomas Browne's conclusions that in seventy or eighty years a man may have *a deep gust of the world; know what it is, what it can afford, and what it is to have been a man.* Against this we have the outburst of Robert Burns:

When ance life's day draws near the gloamin',
Then fareweel vacant, careless roamin',
An' fareweel cheerfu' tankards foamin',
An' social noise;
An' fareweel dear, deluding Woman,
The joy of joys.

Here we have a sharp clash of opinion in which it might be argued that Burns and Bacon are realists, while Browning and Browne are romanticists trying to conceal the facts of life by denying the melancholy of sunset and praising its sombre glories. I think the answer lies in those misunderstood words: "Those whom the gods love die young." Surely the true meaning is that those whom the gods love die young no matter what their years may be.

I lunched with Lloyd George just before his eightieth birthday, and although his memories of thirty years back were more vivid than those of more recent times, his charm and humour and mischievous appraisal of politicians were a delight to the mind as well as to the ear, for his voice was distilled music. He had not grown benevolent with age, nor did he discover virtue in the commonplace. He went to his death with his rapier unblunted by the years.

Sir William Mulock of Toronto reached his ninety-ninth birthday in the war, but on patriotic grounds refused to use up all those candles on the festive cake. " We shall resume the custom after the war," he told his sprightly seventy-year-old butler. A local reporter called to interview him, and with that politeness which characterises all journalists said that he hoped to be there when Sir William reached his century. " Why not ? " said the tough old oak. " You look reasonably healthy."

He loved to stay up late and talk, and when those of us who were younger grew fatigued he declared that men wasted too much time in sleep. Asked for his secret of longevity he replied : " I get a bang out of everything I do." But he did not reach the hundred years. Even the stoutest oak must fall—as Madam Butterfly priggishly observes in the first act of the opera.

Gladstone formed his last Government when he was eighty-three. Clemenceau was called to save France when he was eighty. Then what is their secret ?

I have heard it said that men of regular habits grow old according to schedule and die within the proper statistical period. I have also been told that men who lead healthy out-of-door lives and devote much energy to games not only look their age but feel it. But—and it is a comforting thought—those who live by the mind have within them a strength that defies the years and makes the body a servant rather than the master.

Nothing is so ageing as repetition, nothing so stultifying as regular habits, nothing so wearying as the refusal to enjoy new experiences. So I look towards my leader, the immortal Churchill, with his deep " gust of the world," and can almost hear him proclaim with Browning : " Grow old with me ! The best is yet to be."

NOW let us turn from travelling through the years to travelling in Britain. Not long ago, on a lovely sunny Friday, I entrained from Paddington for South Wales and enjoyed what has been called " An Englishman's idea of Heaven "—an empty first-class compartment. What other form of travel can compare in comfort with a train ? In a motor-car one is always conscious of oncoming traffic, whether as driver or passenger, nor can you get the view of the countryside that is possible from the window of a railway compartment.

A train does not have to fight its way through crowded, ugly towns, but pursues its lordly, lonely way through the verdant countryside. Instead of looking at people we have the contemplative cow, the little church at the top of the slope, with its steeple silhouetted against the sky, the mill stream, and the cottage nestling in the fields beside a winding road.

Is there a man with soul so dead that he is not fascinated by trains ? Let the British Railways recall to the public the joys of train travel, and leave motoring to those who dread the contemplative hour.

IF you have recently noticed in London an air of pensive elegance I suggest that it is because Michael Arlen has been revisiting the scenes of his former triumphs. He has altered little since the day, long, long ago, when he came to my office in the *Sunday Express* and offered to write a weekly article for eight guineas. We had an economy wave on at the time and I offered him seven, which he refused. Thus did he decline modest security for the greater gamble of literature.

At heart he is an incurable romanticist, believing profoundly in peers, women, good wine and the American dollar. To him elegance is the first necessity. In New York he will drop in to " 21 " and sip a cocktail, but he leaves before the conversation becomes alcoholically repetitive. At the Colony Restaurant he is received with hushed respect by the waiters, who hand him the menu as if it were a priceless manuscript.

Having made money out of writing, he writes no more, but enjoys a pleasant preoccupation in the Stock Market quotations. After a long absence he finds London much altered. The birds of paradise have flown, the bright young things have scattered like the leaves of yesteryear, there are new gods, and hardly a green hat to be seen.

He feels like one who treads alone a banquet-hall deserted. But he treads softly on his dreams. What a pity he made money too soon ! As Arnold Bennett said : " No one but a fool would write except for money." Fortunately Sir Stafford Cripps makes certain that we scribblers will always have that incentive. Even genius cannot live entirely on the food of thought.

THERE are reasons why I read the *Evening Standard* with a respect just short of reverence, but I must confess to being somewhat puzzled by a recent leading article in that estimable publication. The *Standard* thinks that London is too self-satisfied, too self-centred, and that we ignore the fact that motorists want to go to other places. Therefore, the newspaper declares, there should be signposts in London directing the motorist to Birmingham, the Lake District, Brighton, Oxford, Manchester and other havens of delight.

The spectacle of a motoring tourist stopping in Piccadilly Circus and examining a sign with an arrow pointing to Leeds is a pleasing one. To the accompaniment of angry hoots he encircles the roundabout, finds himself in Leicester Square and encounters a sign " To Stratford-upon-Avon." In Trafalgar Square he debouches on to the Strand and (if the repairs are started) reads a sign : " One way traffic only." Then having got to Ludgate Circus he discovers a sign which points him to Eastbourne.

Even if there were useful indications as to North, South, East and West the bemused motorist might start up a road that winds like a crescent and ends up in another direction altogether. The *Standard* means well, but London is too old and too complicated for such well-meant simplification. Even to those of us who live here it is no easy task to find the road to Brighton or Reigate. As for Walton-on-the-Hill, it eludes me like a good resolution.

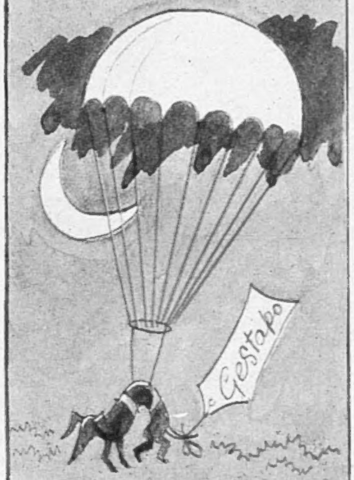
WHICH reminds us of a secret session that took place in Parliament in 1940, when we were expecting invasion by the Germans. Many good suggestions were made, and we were much impressed by one M.P. who wanted wrong signposts put up all over the country. This would have been fun, but it was decided in preference to do away with them altogether.

On that occasion I made a suggestion which was greeted with undeserved ribaldry. I urged the Prime Minister to instruct the public to give the Germans exactly the same directions as in normal times. The spectacle of a German Staff Officer being told to take the third turning on the right, bear left until he came to the *Rose and Crown*, then bear right, turn left and go on until he came to a church and then go round it but don't take the second turning—and then to add " you can't miss it "—would have been worthy of a Bateman drawing, and would certainly have involved the Germans in a major disaster.

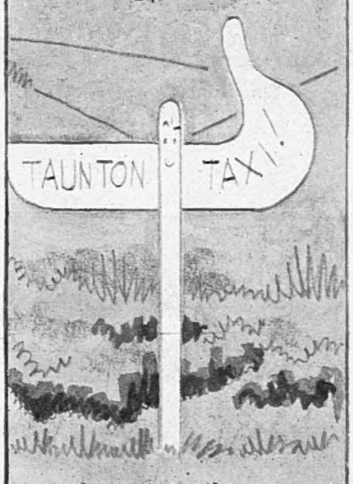
(But that is the worst of Parliament. M.P.s. will not grasp a great idea when it is offered to them.)

Beverley Baxter

—MOTORING TOURIST—



—INVASION BY THE GERMANS—



—WRONG SIGN POSTS—

—MAJOR DISASTER—

"ORPHEUS" BALLET FOR A LONDON PREMIÈRE

ON July 10 the New York City Ballet Company opens a London season at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and on July 17 a new ballet, *Orpheus*, will have its European première. The choreography is by Balanchine, music by Stravinsky ; décor and dresses by Isamu Noguchi. In the picture Tanaquil le Clercq and Nicholas Magallanes are dancing two of the leading rôles. The New York City Ballet owes its inception to M. Balanchine, its Artistic Director, and Lincoln Kirstein. It has presented four seasons at the New York City Centre, having among its leading dancers Maria Tallchief, wife of M. Balanchine ; Nicholas Magallanes, who was introduced to Balanchine by painter Pavel Tchelitchew ; and Tanaquil le Clercq, who began her training, aged seven, under Mordkin.

John Beckford-Bevan in fourteenth-century armour was admired by girl students in costumes of the mediæval and Stuart periods.

Brenda Tanner and Harry Evans in the dress of the 1830's made friends with *Spick* and *Span*, the black and white family poodles.

In costumes of the days of Charles I., Victor Cardew and Shelagh Gregory played a duet on guitar and recorder.

PERIOD COSTUMES IN A TUDOR SETTING

SELDOM does a fashion show have such a setting in which to display its creations as did a recent period "collection" for which Lord de L'Isle and Dudley lent his beautiful Elizabethan mansion, Penshurst Place, in Kent. The show was entitled "Fashion's Brightest Arts Decoy"; was staged by the students of the Central School of Arts and Crafts. The costumes, all designed and made by the students, represented many periods ranging from the mediæval to the Victorian. Three of Lord and Lady de L'Isle and Dudley's four children took part in the pageantry.

George Jowett as Henry VIII. escorted a lady of the Tudor days through one of the splendid archways of Penshurst Place.

Pre-wedding rehearsal was held by the Rev. Godfrey Lloyd, with the bridegroom, Lieutenant J. O. Roberts, R.N., and the bride, Lady Hermione Stuart

The bridegroom's stag-party the night before. Most of the guests his colleagues, instructors and pupils from Lossiemouth Royal Naval Air Station.

Surrounded by portraits of her ancestors, Lady Hermione received a boisterous greeting from her Alsatian in her home, Darnaway Castle.

A STUART MARRIED FROM DARNAWAY CASTLE

A BRILLIANT Scottish occasion was the wedding of Lady Hermione Stuart, only daughter of the Earl and Countess of Moray, of Darnaway Castle, Forres, and Castle Stuart, Inverness-shire, to Lieutenant John O. Roberts, R.N., son of Mr. J. V. Roberts, Montgomeryshire, and of Mrs. Fischer, of Haselor, Warwickshire. They were married in St. John's Episcopal Church, Forres; and the reception was held in the historic Randolph's Hall, oldest portion of Darnaway Castle, built by Randolph Earl of Moray, friend of the Bruce and Regent of Scotland. Lieutenant Roberts, a Flying Instructor at the Royal Naval Air Station, Lossiemouth, saw war service with the Russian convoys, and was in the North Africa and D-Day landings.

Photographed by BARON

Dressing the bride: Lady Hermione with two friends, Helen Armenoff from Paris, and bridesmaid Elizabeth Milne from the Transvaal, a goddaughter of Lady Moray.

From the Castle to the church: the bride and two friends left Darnaway. An amusing angle-shot which shows the car "dressed" for the occasion.

They left the church between a guard of honour from the Lossiemouth R.N. Air Station: Lieutenant J. O. Roberts, R.N., and Lady Hermione Roberts. She wore a flashing diamond tiara with her white satin dress.

A huge number of guests, kilted, befurred, thronged the Castle steps as bride and bridegroom drove away. The centre figure on right is the bride's father, the Earl of Moray: in the foreground bridesmaid Elizabeth Milne. . . .

. . . and what they saw on the honeymoon car: lucky tokens included a petrol-can, a milk-can, boots, a hot-water bottle.

Candid Cameo

MRS. PERLA GIBSON

("The Lady in White")

★

By Noel Langley

I AM prejudiced in Perla Siedle Gibson's favour and therefore not the man to write this, because in the far-off early 'thirties in South Africa she championed me—a declaration of faith which required nearly as much moral courage as championing Galileo at the time he clashed with the flat-earthites.

I first remember her when she staged *Aïda* in the Durban Town Hall in 1932, single-handed and practically single-voiced. It was not the most congenial stage to adorn with the pomp of glorious Egypt: after about 6 ft. of apron it mounted in large steps to the rafters and required from Aïda much of the prowess of a mountain goat along with the contralto. The point that distinguishes this anecdote is the quite staggering oblivion to the impossible that drove her to achieve at least half the impossible. At that time, Verdi to our local audiences was caviare to the demobbed General. Perla surmounted all that along with the terraced stage. She wanted to stage *Aïda,* and she brought it off under conditions that would have dropped Sir Thomas Beecham sobbing to his knees.

Says brisk, forthright, saucy *Time*: "She is a smiling, stocky, big-bosomed, Wagnerian soprano," which tends to create the impression that she goes about with a paste helmet clapped over one eye and a bent spear at the ready, intoning "O-hee-yoh!" She does not.

She is naïve and childlike in her uncritical faith in the good in life. Even now I sometimes find myself doubting the extraordinary innocence of her nature, even while I know it to be genuine. She still trusts life: she trusts people: the divinity which protects babies and drunks takes a little time off to protect Perla, too. She lavishes kindness on a creeping Heep, and lo, the creeping Heep becomes Copperfield, transmogrified, with not a fang in him, and never bites her.

Her father was known as the Doyen of South African Shipping, her brother Jack is a crack Springbok cricketer; she studied the piano in Germany as a girl . . . later studied singing in London and New York; came back to Durban rather than chase an elusive laurel-wreath in opera; and might have lived a pleasant but obscure life if a young Irish sailor had not shouted to her, on an afternoon during the war years, to "sing something Irish" as his ship was leaving, and she was standing watching it go, dressed in the white coat she wore for her canteen work on the wharf. She sang "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" through her cupped hands: later, when she progressed to the unique status of greeting and seeing-off every ship, she used a megaphone.

Her exuberance bubbles up perpetually: she does not go in for "moods," off-moments, or dumps: is only defensively thin-skinned about her painting, which is a secondary pursuit. In this field she is hurt by stern professional criticism; but not angered by the critic as some of us others are. "If you don't absolutely adore *this* picture, I shall cry," she threatens. She would, too. Her painting has the same benign, uncritical exuberance of her disposition: it is decorative, as free of guile as Adam before the Apple, and it reflects her immense, unalloyed enjoyment of life. Some of her flower-groups rush at you like delighted but undisciplined Red Setters. One or two of them sulk. She paints ships and sea in the style of Winslow Homer, but I doubt if he got the same extrovert kick out of his subject matter.

She lives in a house that overlooks Durban harbour, four minutes by car from her official throne, the dock. For a woman living in a town of that size in South Africa, she probably holds a world's record for massed friendships and nostalgic goodwill. She has a large autograph album which she reveres. George Bernard Shaw, on his South African travels in the early 'thirties, found her cosily enchanting. "What is a woman with a voice like yours, doing *here*?" he demanded, or words to that effect.

In the war years she showed what a woman with a voice like hers was doing there.

The soldiers and sailors who passed through Durban during the war saw her as a motherly reassurance that their own private little worlds had not gone for ever. The "doughboys" christened her "Kate Smith," whom she most resembles. They also dubbed her homespun "Ma." The British paid their homage a little more gallantly and called her "The Lady in White." Her singing still packs its old punch. The other day she sang a song to a battle-scarred old veteran who had been welcomed by her on the Durban docks during the war; and he wept openly.

She stood like a plump little everyday saint out of a Rubens frieze and kept her spirits flying through all weathers, every time a ship of war hove to. Sometimes it was not as easy as it looked. When her son Roy was killed in Italy, the wounded being carried off the ship made too poignant an impact on her self-control, and she stood and sang with the tears pouring down her cheeks.

She worked unceasingly, at all and any hours; all through the war years; with the canteen on the dockside, in the hospitals, and even made special 4 a.m. trips to the convoys passing through.

She always knew when the ships were leaving, which was more than the crews did; and was there to sing them good-bye. She is probably the only civilian woman in naval history to whom the ensign was dipped by so many ships as they passed.

What quality shall I select to pay tribute to? The simplest, kindest heart I know. Most of us try our best to do the least possible damage to our fellow-beings. Without trying at all, she has done either good or nothing.

★

Who . . . Me?

"I sang a song into the air . . .
And the song from beginning to end
I found again in the heart of a friend."

Perla Gibson

Photocollage by ANGUS McBEAN

BACKGROUND TO "THE LADY IN WHITE"

PRINCESS MARGARET

HERE, there and everywhere, Princess Margaret is constantly busy with public engagements. And though her Royal Highness will not be twenty until August 21, her duties now form an integral part of the Royal Family's official programme.

PORTSMOUTH.—As Commodore of the Sea Rangers, Princess Margaret was transported in a gig manned by Rangers on a visit to the 133-year-old frigate *Foudroyant*, now a training-ship.

CANTERBURY.—Her Royal Highness presented the prizes at St. Edmund's School, of which the King is patron.

BETHNAL GREEN.—At the Borough's Central Library she opened the Bethnal Green Youth Week.

EAST GRINSTEAD.—A visit to the Sir Beachcroft Towse Sunshine Home Nursery School for Blind Children.

DATE-BOOK
(Our Social Diary)

JUNE 15.

(Left.) Lord Bolingbroke and St. John, amateur musician and composer, was married at Christ Church, Sutton, Surrey, to Miss Valenzia Frohawk, 'cellist. They will live at Crow, on the edge of the New Forest.

JUNE 17.

(Right.) Wimbledon stars gave taste of their quality at Lady Crosfield's tennis party at Highgate, in aid of Greek village. Watching L. to r.: Miss Athinogeni, Major Dick Brandram, Lady Katherine Brandram, Lady Crosfield.

BOLINGBROKE — FROHAWK WEDDING.

AT LADY CROSFIELD'S PARTY.

JUNE 18.

(Left.) Engaged: Prince George of Denmark, Acting Military Attaché to Danish Embassy in London, and son of Prince Axel and Princess Margherita of Denmark, and his fiancée, Lady Anson, a niece of the Queen, and daughter of the late the Hon. John Bowes-Lyon and of the Hon. Mrs. John Bowes-Lyon.

JUNE 20.

(Right.) Anglo-Dutch historical occasion at the Victoria and Albert. H.E. the Netherlands Ambassador opened the "William and Mary" Exhibition. Right, below painted silk hanging by Francois Bonnemer is Mme. Verduynen, wife of the Ambassador, next to the V. and A.'s director, Mr. Leigh Ashton.

PRINCE GEORGE OF DENMARK AND LADY ANSON.

"WILLIAM AND MARY" EXHIBITION AT THE V. & A.

JUNE 20.

Hundreds of guests at big Society wedding at St. Margaret's, Westminster, when Lord Westmorland, son of the late Earl and of the Countess of Westmorland, married Miss Jane Findlay, daughter of Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Roland L. Findlay, of Naseby Woolleys, Rugby. Bride was given away by her father; was attended by Anthony Ward and little sister Georgina, the groom's nephew and niece; and the groom's brother, the Hon. Julian Fane, was best man. To left of the newly-marrieds are Miss Davina Portman with Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Peter Williams. To right: Miss Serena Sheffield and her mother, Mrs. Sheffield.

WESTMORLAND — FINDLAY WEDDING.

[Continued overleaf.

DATE

MIXED BOGEY FOURSOMES FOR CHOLMONDELEY CUP.

JUNE 20.

Down to Walton Heath to see how the Ladies' Parliamentary Golf Association comported themselves in second Annual Mixed Bogey Foursomes for the Cholmondeley Cup. Had to leave early for London date, but give here, left: action shot of Mrs. Harrison Proctor driving in good style from the eighteenth tee. On right: Lady Strathallan, the Hon. Esmé Glyn, Lord Strathallan and the Duke of Norfolk.

WARRENDER — MYER WEDDING.

HER MAJESTY AT CLIVEDEN.

JUNE 22.

(Left.) The Hon. Simon Warrender, second son of Lord Bruntisfield and of Dorothy Lady Bruntisfield, left St. George's, Hanover Square, through a vast crowd after his wedding to Miss Pamela Myer, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Myer, of Melbourne, Australia.

JUNE 24.

(Right.) The Queen was present at a garden-party in splendid surroundings of Lord and Lady Astor's famous home, Cliveden, Taplow. It was given by Lady Astor—accompanying her Majesty in picture—for school teachers from the British Commonwealth and the U.S.A.

CHRIST CHURCH BEAGLES BALL.

JUNE 24.

Over to Ewelme Park, country home of Colonel and Mrs. d'Arcy Hall, and lent by them for Christ Church Beagles Ball—a first-class background with all the trophies of the chase on walls. Round about 170 guests present. On left: Mr. John Manser with Miss Christie-Miller, and right: Lieut.-Col. James MacNabb, Mrs. Oliver Nickalls, Mrs. R. L. Holland.

BOOK

JUNE 24.

The eve-of-Wimbledon (almost said eve-of-Waterloo) dinner at the R.A.C., with all the stars present, correct and anticipatory. Here are a few of the guests. On left: Mr. and Mrs. Victor Seixas, of U.S.A. He's making his début. On right: Mme. Boegner, U.S.A., Mrs. Peters and Miss Nancy Chaffee, U.S.A., of whom we've already heard quite a lot.

PRE-WIMBLEDON DINNER.

JUNE 26.

Princess Elizabeth was godmother to five-weeks-old Michael John Ulick, second son of Lord and Lady Brabourne, christened at the tiny church at Mersham, in Kent. With the baby's father and mother on each side of her, and Lord Mountbatten, grandfather, just visible behind, the Princess carried her new godson out into the world.

PRINCESS ELIZABETH AT A CHRISTENING.

JUNE 26.

At the All-England Lawn Tennis Club; the first day of Wimbledon. Good climatically, unexciting sartorially. Smaller crowd than last year's first day. Mr. Seixas, who's seen at top of page, started his Wimbledon début well by winning on Centre Court from another débutant, Swedish S. Davidson, decisive factor in his game being the dipping forehand passing shots. Well, here are some fashions on important people. Left: Mrs. William Talbert, wife of the U.S. player. Centre: the famous Geoff Brown, of Australia, with his wife. Right: Lady Ronaldshay.

WIMBLEDON CHAMPIONSHIPS, FIRST DAY.

[Continued overleaf.

DATE-BOOK
(Abroad)

MAY 6.

Tripoli, North Africa. *Sweltering Saturday morning ; hot desert wind blowing for start of race meeting organised by No. I Division which drew the Army, civilians, Italians, Tripolitanian Arabs to Busserta Stadium. Gay, multi-coloured crowd in and out of uniform. Picture left : Tripoli's leading horsewoman, Signorina Lilliana Lattanzi, with smile and bunch of flowers, having won the Pretty Polly Stakes. Right : Mr. Osborne, 4/7th Dragoon Guards, tied hammer-head round his waist to get weight up to required 12 st. 7 lb. before weighing in.*

RACE-MEETING, TRIPOLI.

Tripoli (continued). *View of the grandstand ; steeplechase in progress—the fence a thick mud wall topped by scrub. Day's programme as varied as the spectators ; the card showed flat races, 'chases for British and Italian competitors, a ladies' race, and event for Arabs only—the Garian Plate. Many horses entered belong to Tripolitanian Police ; some privately owned by British officers ; others on strength of No. I Division. Mechanisation of Guards hasn't lost them their horsemanship ! As for form, it was a " dark horse," but Tote zestfully patronised. Last event, 2 m. I f. 'chase, brought big surprise when small aged pony owned by 1st Bn. Coldstreamers, ridden by Captain Windsor-Clive, won in magnificent finish at 36 to I.*

HOLLAND FESTIVAL.

JUNE 15—JULY 15.

Amsterdam, *for Holland Festival. Opening attended by Queen Juliana, Prince Bernhard, members of Dutch Cabinet, Sir Philip Nichols, and other members of Diplomatic Corps. Visitors could visualise days of fine flowering of seventeenth-century painting. Here, in picture, biggest event of Calverstraat festival is reconstruction of Rembrandt's wedding. Rembrandt played by actor Johan Elsensohn, and bride Saskia van Uylenburg by Pit Rincker, driving to Town Hall of "Damstad"—old-style town built for anniversary celebrations in front of Queen's Palace.*

ROYAL FAMILY IN EXILE

KING LEOPOLD OF THE BELGIANS, his wife, the Princess de Réthy, and the Royal family were photographed at the villa at Pregny, near Geneva, Switzerland, where they have so long awaited a solution to Belgium's Royal question. On left is Princess Charlotte. Right, the only child of the King's second marriage, Prince Alexandre ; centre, King Leopold and the Princess de Réthy ; and below, right, the Heir Apparent, Prince Baudouin, with Prince Albert.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO . . .

LT. P. RAYNER, for starting something really new in parachutes.

THIS is not a lovely bunch of grapes : it 's an outsize bunch of eighty hydrogen balloons which took fifty hours to inflate. Drifting earthwards beneath them is twenty-four-year-old Lieut. Rayner, who is also attached to a parachute battalion of the Territorial Army. The occasion was a balloon-hopping demonstration at Leeds on June 26.

CAPTAIN C. B. FRY, for being the "Mr. Chips" of H.M.S. *Mercury*.

BOYS of the training-ship *Mercury* cheered and whirled their caps into the air for Captain C. B. Fry (right), England cricketer and famous all-round sportsman, when he said good-bye to them. He is retiring at the age of seventy-eight from the directorship of the nautical training-ship at Hamble, Hampshire, where for forty-two years he has worked without payment.

YOUNG JIMMY MOULDING, just about Britain's youngest sheep-minder, for making a convincing Boy Blue.

SON and grandson of Sussex shepherds, four-year-old Jimmy doesn't let his duties weigh him down too much. But perhaps counting his flock sent him off to sleep like this, with one sheep for a pillow, and another for a nice woolly blanket.

WEEK-END FLIER EDWARD DAY, for his split-second King's Cup win.

TALL, curly-haired victor of the King's Cup Air Race at Wolverhampton was twenty-four-year-old Edward Day. He crossed the winning line a split-second ahead of Group-Captain Peter Townsend, piloting Princess Margaret's entry. Day, a fruit farmer of Marden, Kent, who flew a fragile-looking Miles *Hawk* trainer, has only 160 flying hours to his credit—mostly at week-ends.

. . . AND WE APPLAUD

Photographed by ANGUS McBEAN.

AGNES DE MILLE,

for bringing to musical shows dancing of such a high order as to ensure top successes for the Hammerstein–Rodgers plus de Mille triangle.

SUPREME choreographer of the ballet in *Oklahoma !* and of those in *Carousel*, at Drury Lane—and doubtless more to come—Agnes de Mille has brought to the famous Hammerstein-Rodgers partnership the third art which completes the magic circle. The *Carousel* show has for its highlights the Hornpipe Ballet, and the Beach Ballet with Bambi Linn—the latter carrying on the plot so vividly as to need no dialogue. Educated in the University of California, Agnes de Mille studied dancing in London under Koslov, Marie Rambert and Tamara Karsavina. During her career she has arranged the dances for many musicals, including C. B. Cochran's production of *Nymph Errant* and the film *Romeo and Juliet*.

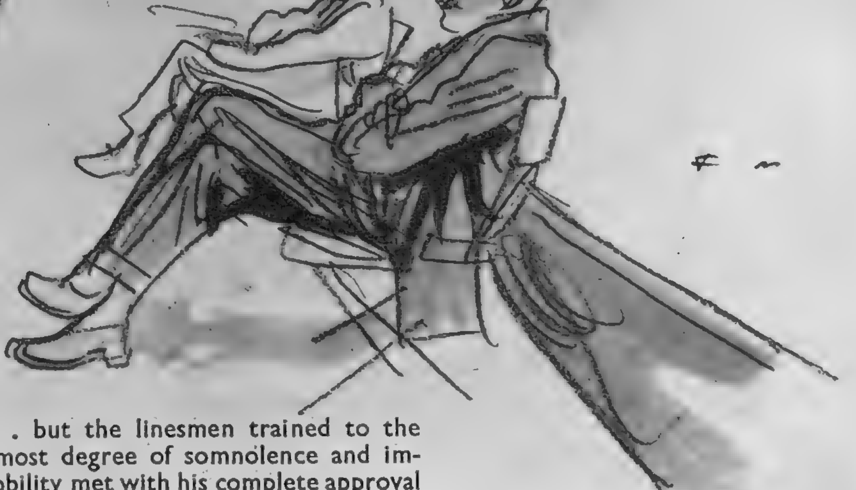
WIMBLEDON,

WE followed a veteran of a thousand Centre Court battles, his panama hat buzzing with recollections of former champions, and we record here some of his reactions to this year's Wimbledon :

The fashion parade on the Broad Walk made him snort a little, but we noticed his eye following Nancy Chaffee (on the left) . . .

The umpire's chair met with his approval, though we had to explain the use of the gadgets (wired for sound, gas, electricity and constant hot water) . . .

950



Nevertheless, he appreciated that nothing could change that empty feeling which all gladiators must experience before entering the arena . . .

"Autograph-hunters!" he growled. Gardner Mulloy and Mrs. Pat Todd probably agreed with him . . .

He thought the "Turkish bath business" round the umpire's chair rather ungentlemanly and a little coarse . . .

. . . but the linesmen trained to the utmost degree of somnolence and immobility met with his complete approval

Specially drawn for "The Sketch" by Francis Marshall.

Miss Anne Caunter and Mr. Philip Dobell-Harrison thought the dodg'em cars were fun.

A Crimean War cannon made the venue for some of the guests who viewed with admiration a musketeer of the seventeenth century.

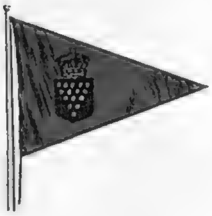
Among the sideshows the swings were a flying attraction.

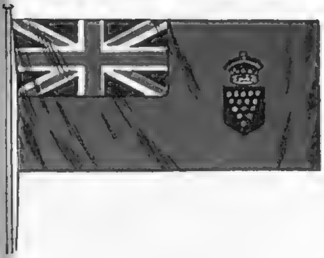
AT THE H.A.C. FLANK COMPANY'S BALL

THE Annual Flank Company's open-air ball and fair of the Honourable Artillery Company, held in their Armoury House, Finsbury, was a riot, attended by over 2000 guests. In the grounds were dodg'em cars, roundabouts, chairplanes and sideshows of all sorts, all well patronised. A huge marquee was erected for the dancing, and rooms in the 200-year-old Armoury House, lined with obsolete guns, trophies and ancient Colours of the Regiment, were transformed into bars. As a military formation, the H.A.C. is almost the oldest regiment in the world ; among its distinguished members have been Prince Rupert, John Milton, Marlborough, Christopher Wren, architect, and Kirke, notorious Colonel of "Kirke's Lambs."

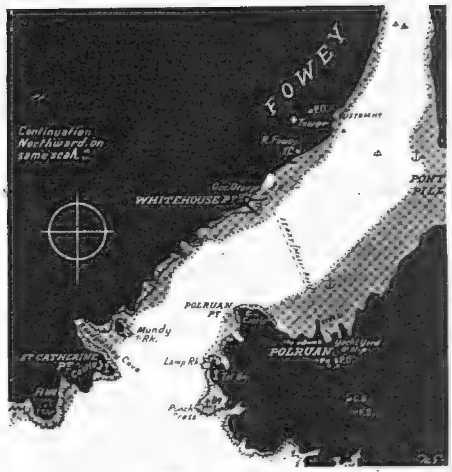
At the coconut shies were L/Bdr. Julian Howell and Pauline Cowley.

All lit up : a panoramic view of the fair in the grounds of Armoury House, the H.A.C.'s H.Q.





EXTRACTS
from the log of the
ROYAL FOWEY YACHT CLUB



Courtesy: *Faber and Faber.*

THE Royal Fowey Yacht Club has been in existence since 1894; the Clubhouse was opened in 1898, and received the Royal patronage in 1907. It is beautifully placed on the west bank of Fowey Harbour, about half-a-mile from the mouth of the river.

Among past members who left their mark was Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. He was Commodore from 1911 to his death in 1944, and the Troy class—most popular in this quarter of the world—was named after his book, *Troy Town*, generally known to have been written around Fowey.

The Troy class were all built locally by Archy Watty, who died last year, shortly after the launching of No. 17. Generally speaking, the lower numbers hold their own best . . . built of better material, maybe. The Troys are considered to be a very "hot" one-design class which, given favourable conditions, can even make the Dragons tremble.

They are all named after jewels, with the exception of No. 4, called *Shimmer*, owned by the Commodore, Lieut.-General Sir Frederick A. M. Browning, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., at whose home near Fowey, his wife, Daphne du Maurier, has written many of her widely read novels.

Arthur G. Brown

Hon. Secretary.

The Clubhouse.

The Commodore, Lieut.-General Sir Frederick Browning, sailing in his *Shimmer*, with skipper and crew.

Watching Troys racing from the clubhouse terrace. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. Arthur G. Brown, is second from left.

AT THE THEATRE.

Old Stagers

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE (Aldwych).
Betty-Ann Davies presents to us the last stage of an unhappy creature's decline and fall in a New Orleans slum.

CAROUSEL (Drury Lane).
Forget comparisons and see this as a good Rodgers-Hammerstein musical play in its own right.

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY (Duchess).
Wynyard Browne's Christmas gathering in a Norfolk vicarage is the best domestic play in London.

MR. GILLIE (Garrick).
James Bridie (author) and Alastair Sim (actor) in partnership again.

RING ROUND THE MOON (Globe).
A charade, taken from the French by Christopher Fry, and produced expertly by Peter Brook.

THE HEIRESS (Haymarket).
Godfrey Tearle and Wendy Hiller in the period-piece based on Henry James's *Washington Square*.

BRIGADOON (His Majesty's).
Here is the Scots village that comes to life on only one day in a century.

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM (Lyric).
Another year's run. John Clements and Kay Hammond stroke along Farquhar's late Restoration comedy.

THE COCKTAIL PARTY (New).
Mr. Eliot's homily in verse, which is the talking-point of the summer season.

KING'S RHAPSODY (Palace).
Ivor Novello is the King, and Vanessa Lee his Queen, in Novello's Ruritanian "musical."

HIS EXCELLENCY (Princes).
Eric Portman shows how an ex-docker can govern a Mediterranean island.

TOUCH AND GO (Prince of Wales).
A buoyant Anglo-American revue.

VENUS OBSERVED (St. James's).
A dance of words with which Sir Laurence Olivier has opened his St. James's season, and Christopher Fry has increased his fame.

CASTLE IN THE AIR (Savoy).
Alan Melville has Jack Buchanan and Coral Browne to shoot the pointed arrows of an ingenious light comedy.

OKLAHOMA! (Stoll).
After three years it is still a Beautiful Mornin' in one of the most famous musical plays of our time.

QUEEN ELIZABETH SLEPT HERE (Strand).
A farce about the cares of country life in deepest Bucks.

BACKGROUND (Westminster).
When a divorce is on the way, what happens to the children? Warren Chetham-Strode answers the question dramatically.

HOME AT SEVEN (Wyndham's).
Sir Ralph Richardson is superb as the ordinary man in extraordinary circumstances who is at the centre of Sherriff's dexterous play.

★ First Choice ★

"GOLDEN CITY"

(Adelphi)

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of gold; but until the première of John Toré's "musical romance," I had never attended a Gold Rush. No "calm serene" here: the noise at these events in a stage Cape Town and Johannesburg (period 1886) might well have reached South Africa itself. Let me make it clear that this is not a tiring shindy. Not at all. It is, when the first sentimental spasms are over, a boisterous, virile business that Broadway might like to inspect. John Toré's plot is nothing, and his music is singable rather than remarkable; what really matters are the vigour and invention with which Michael Benthall has put the piece on the stage, aided by the dance arrangements of Robert Helpmann. Audrey Cruddas, designer of scenery and costumes, has also done a fine job: the sets never remind you for a moment of routine musical comedy.

The shining quality of the affair is its zest. You feel that Benthall has enjoyed his production, and that his company enjoys its performance—whether it is disclosing the back-stage mysteries of a Cape Town variety theatre (Helpmann's wit is visible here), complete with group of fantastics, Bearded Lady, Seal Trainer, and so on; or whether it is roaring the chorus of "There's Gold in the North," or smashing up Mabel's saloon in Jo'burg. (The cast has some dead-shots: I would like to hear of Eleanor Summerfield's prowess at darts). Then, too, the Zulus. Towards the end of the play, Mr. Toré and Mr. Benthall decide to burn down a farmhouse. Before the stage can be filled with smoke and flame, we must have a Zulu fire ritual, and, at the première, it was during this sustained stamping-and-thudding that the occupants of the front row of stalls at the Adelphi mentally made their wills. But everything turned out all right. Nobody crossed the orchestra pit; and we were able to hear the entire company singing "It's Love, my Darling, it's Love," as the curtain fell.

In the cast, which has responded so well to Benthall's direction, Norman Lawrence and Julia Shelley are strong singers; Moyra Fraser dances exuberantly; and Muriel Brunskill has one good number called "Alles Sal Reg Kom" (translation in programme). But the joy is Eleanor Summerfield. She has waited a long time for this. When I saw her a few months ago, bearing the burden of a dully-produced farce at the Embassy, I wished that a good angel would make the right chance for her. Here it is: a part to which she can bring not merely the continuous glint of her comedy, but also the pathos with which she fills the night's best song, "What more is there to say?" *Golden City* is a generous evening; Eleanor Summerfield is the gold.

. . with J. C. TREWIN

"SEAGULLS OVER SORRENTO"

(Apollo)

RONALD SHINER was for so long in the R.A.F. (at the top of Whitehall) that we were inclined to forget that he could be anyone but Aircraftman Porter of *Worm's Eye View*. Now he has joined the Royal Navy to see the world, and in *Seagulls Over Sorrento* we find him on an island in the Orkneys—don't worry about the title—under the name of Able Seaman Badger. Badger and Porter have a good deal in common: the darting, needled Cockney repartee, the lighthouse-flash of resource, the peering eye for the main chance. Besides this, Badger at the Apollo has one passage—the reading of a letter left by a dead man—in which Ronald Shiner can show to us another side of a personality we had come to accept as merely a "wide boy" droll. It is a performance most expertly-gauged. For that matter, everyone in the cast is loyal to author and producer, especially John Gregson, Nigel Stock, and Bernard Lee as three ratings of assorted types, and William Hartnell as their slave-driver.

The piece is a fresh and likeable mixture of mess-deck comedy and of melodrama. Its only tiresome moments—though the fault does not rest with the actors—are those in which "Haggis" and "Sprog" grow reminiscent, and in which A.B. Hudson insists upon coupling a feast of reason and a flow of soul with the breakfast tomatoes. But when the play has ended, you remember only the spirit of the comedy, the unexpectedness of the setting, and the way in which all hands have combined for our delight.

★

"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE"

(Open Air Theatre)

PRODUCERS who hunt up funny tricks for the *Merchant* forget that, however bored they themselves may be with the famous comedy, playgoers never tire of it. And why should they tire? It remains a great and an exciting play. Robert Atkins knows this, and that is why, invariably, he produces it so well, whether indoors or, as now, on the lawn in Regent's Park under the floodlights. His own Shylock has the seal of long experience. Of his company I like in particular the Portia of Ruth Lodge, who is indeed the lady of Belmont; Judith Stott, an exquisite little Nerissa; and Michael Godfrey's staunch Antonio. The Bassanio has not the right vocal quality, and I do not believe in the present Gratiano. But it is a quick, appreciative production, and few scenes go better in the open air than the last at Belmont, in the moon - silvered orchard, Portia's venture won.

Next Stage

A THIRD important musical play within a month is Noel Coward's *Ace of Clubs*, which opens at the Cambridge on July 7. Here we do not go back to the 'Eighties, to a New England clam-bake or the South African gold rush. It is three-and-a-half years since Coward himself looked backwards in *Pacific 1860*. In *Ace of Clubs* we are in the night-life of contemporary London. Pat Kirkwood and Graham Payn lead the cast, and other artists from the "straight" and musical stages include such names as Sylvia Cecil, Elwyn Brook-Jones, Myles Eason and Jack Lambert. Coward produces, and the décor and costumes are by Gladys Calthrop.

MUSICAL SHREW.

Another musical play, not likely to arrive until the end of the year, is *Kiss Me Kate*, which has run for nearly eighteen months at the New Century Theatre, New York. This (Shakespeareans will hear with a certain interest and alarm) is based on *The Taming of the Shrew*, with Cole Porter music and lyrics and book by Sam and Bella Spewack. At present Jack Hylton is negotiating with Alfred Drake (Petruchio) and Patricia Morrison (Kate) to play their original parts, but most of the cast of fifty will be British. Meanwhile, in Regent's Park towards the end of July, Robert Atkins will present Shakespeare's *Shrew* in the open air.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

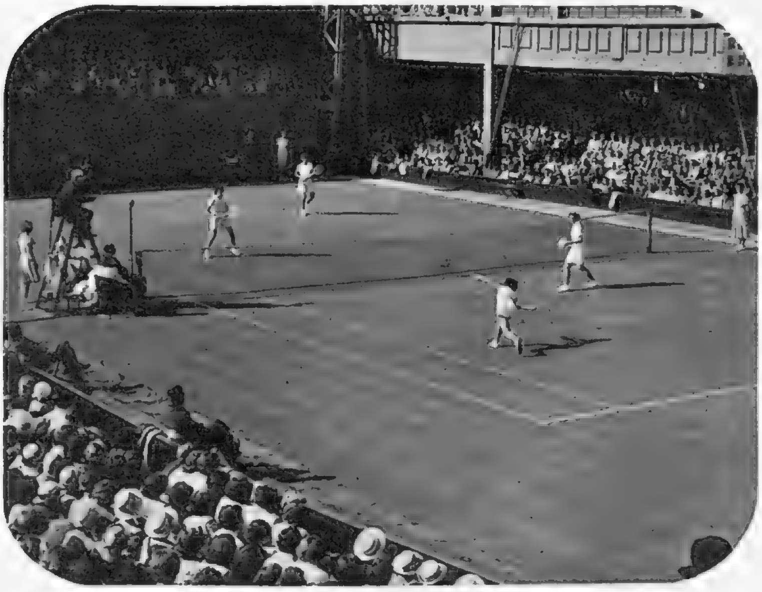
Can you imagine Robertson Hare as a bank clerk whose life is revolutionised after he has visited a music-hall on his fiftieth birthday? This, I gather, is the theme of *Will Any Gentleman ?*, the farce Vernon Sylvaine has now completed for the Hare-Arthur Riscoe partnership which began during the run of *One Wild Oat*. The play, a Linnit and Dunfee production, goes into a preliminary tour on July 17, at Liverpool.

BLACK WORK.

Pat Nye and John Penrose's company, out at the Bedford, Camden Town, is working steadily through the old melodramas. It has recently gone nautical with *Black Ey'd Susan*, and the next venture, which seems to me to have the right tang, will be *Aurora Floyd, or The Dark Deed in the Wood*, by Miss Braddon, who wrote *Lady Audley's Secret*.

GETTING AROUND.

New York answers the visit of the Sadler's Wells Ballet to Broadway with a visit of the New York City Ballet to Covent Garden. During its season—first night on July 10—it will be staging eighteen works . . . *Rose Marie* will open on ice at Harringay Arena on July 13, before a scene of the Rockies built up to a height of 80 ft. . . . *King Lear*, with Gielgud in a part he has played twice at the Old Vic, will be the last new production of the Stratford-upon-Avon Festival on July 18.



One of the most depressing O.B.'s we have seen. The British Wightman Cup pair, Miss J. Quertier (right) and Mrs. J. Walker-Smith, being hopelessly outclassed by the American girls, Mrs. Pat Todd (left) and Miss D. Hart.

In Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton*, the perfect butler Crichton and his master, Lord Loam, change places, having been cast on a desert island. Here Loam (Harcourt Williams) shows proper awe of his new master (Raymond Huntley).

The play we did not see. Barry Jones (left), Ursula Howells and Terence Alexander in Val Gielgud's first production effort of his own play *Away From It All*, which began twenty-five minutes behind schedule.

" Faster, Chatworth ! They 're gaining on you—keep your eye on the ball ! "

TELEVISION

by CYRIL BUTCHER

DURING his recent visit to this country we had the privileged opportunity of meeting that legendary, uncrowned king of Hollywood, Samuel Goldwyn. He is an interesting talker, on practically every subject under the sun ; but, on television, his opinions and statements are downright startling.

" By the end of the year it is estimated that two billion dollars will have been invested by the American public in the purchase of home television sets," he began. That sort of remark is surely enough to make even the most disinterested prick up their ears with a jerk. For that two billion dollars infers an ownership of some seven million sets. With a family of four in mind, together with visiting neighbours, those sets, in turn, infer a potential audience of fifty million viewers. No wonder Mr. Goldwyn says that Hollywood faces no casual threat. (By the way, in case anyone is checking our figures, we would like to point out that a billion, in the U.S.A., is a thousand millions, not a million millions.)

In England the picture is somewhat different. Set-ownership is only rising toward the half-million mark. We base our estimate, rather cynically we regret, on the latest published figure of licence-holders, which is 363,950 ! Up to now, we have only the one relay station, at Sutton Coldfield, whereas in America it is expected to have forty-two cities linked by 15,000 miles of cable or other means of intercommunication by the end of the year.

These figures may, or may not, be of interest. But they do heighten the contrast between Mr. Goldwyn's attitude to this new medium of entertainment, and that of our own film producers. In this country, with television's threat to the cinema box-office of minute proportions to that of America, this attitude is one of suspicious, haughty non-co-operation. If any move has been made for cinema and television to find some way of working together, we have not yet heard of it.

Mr. Goldwyn's approach is somewhat more realistic. He does not bury his head in the sand and refuse to admit the existence of this sturdy infant rival. " Vaudeville made that mistake, in America, in the 'twenties," he informed us. " It refused to meet the challenge of the cinema by improving its programmes. Pictures improved, though, while vaudeville went on its sweet way until one day it woke up to the fact that it had lost its public to the better entertainment.

The best moment in a poorish O.B. Their Majesties' traditional drive at the opening of the Royal Ascot Meeting.

The Story of the Waltz—a well-meant offering from the variety department, but almost ruined through lack of studio space.

Now television is challenging the cinema and its box-office. My answer to that is, we 'll just have to make better pictures. People won't stop going to the cinema just because they 've got a television set. After all, a family with a cook still go out to dine on special occasions. It will have to be a special occasion in the cinema, too. People won't go out to see indifferent entertainment—they can get that at home ! "

That is not all. Mr. Goldwyn is convinced that the motion-picture industry must join forces, not from the point of common ownership and management, but by an interchange of each other's facilities. Directors, artists and authors should be allowed to move freely between the two media, to everyone's mutual advantage.

The film industry could also be of vital assistance to television when it comes to the subject of what Mr. Goldwyn calls " programming." As he says : " The public demand more and more television, all the time. Soon it will be necessary to provide eighteen hours' continuous entertainment. To do this by ' live ' shows would be practically impossible. It would certainly be impossible to maintain a high standard of entertainment that way. And don't forget that once the novelty has worn off—and it won't be so long now—television will have to fight for its hold on the public just as much as the cinema. That will mean the broadcasting, to a considerable extent, of films well produced and specially written, for television. And who has better facilities for producing those than the existing film industry ? "

Mr. Goldwyn may not have been speaking on behalf of other American producers, but his predominant position in Hollywood makes it not unlikely that his attitude will be copied. Would it be too much to ask that it should be copied in this country too ?

FOR a start, we would like to suggest that more of our top screen stars be made available for television. With film studios notoriously idle, at the moment, it could only be to everyone's benefit to keep them before the public. We do not mean, necessarily, that they should oust the rising television stars in plays. But here, surely, is a first-rate opportunity to experiment with the exploitation of their personalities in new ways. Let us take, for example, that brilliant character actor, Peter Ustinov. How many of the public realise that he is an equally brilliant *raconteur*, who illustrates his stories with an uncanny mimicry ? Give him a quarter of an hour a week; let him tell a story, with the camera in full close-up. We warrant viewers would be convulsed, and an entirely new range of film rôles would open itself to Mr. Ustinov. The same sort of thing might be done with many other stars. After all, most comedians want to play Hamlet, and most tragedians want to play in low comedy. Here is a chance to let them try, without the vast loss of money an unsuccessful experimental picture would entail.

As we seem to have turned ourself into a One-man Suggestions Department, might we express a pious hope that Alexandra Palace will in future be a little more conscientious in the timing of programmes ? As head of B.B.C. Drama, Val Gielgud's first venture in production (assisted by Kevin Sheldon) with his own play, *Away From It All*, was surely an occasion of importance. We, at any rate, were prepared to consider it so, and switched on punctually at the stated time. We were greeted by an indifferent O.B. of Speedway Racing with a grating commentary by Patrick Burns. We waited five . . . ten . . . fifteen . . . twenty minutes, and still nothing but speedway racing. At that point we thought of all the other viewers who had adjusted their domestic arrangements so as to be in time for the play, and in protest on their behalf we switched off. We wish Mr. Gielgud well, but it will have to be next time.

OUR CRITIC'S CHOICE

Philip Harben : Television's subtlest clown, who, while making us laugh, has been showing us how simple it is to get away from the routine of " Fish and chips " and " Roast and two veg."

However, the plays we saw, we enjoyed. Royston Morley's production of Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* was chiefly memorable for a delightful Lord Loam, by Harcourt Williams. Barbara Mullen, in Cornish guise, was naturally excellent as a long-suffering mother with three tiresome sons, in *Mother of Men*, by Ada G. Abbot (produced by Eric Fawcett). The youngest son, played by Iain Scott, was a sensitive picture of painful adolescence.

Variety's chief contribution was "The Story of the Waltz," a title that explains itself. It was cleverly produced by Christian Simpson, but the cramped conditions of the studio were all too evident. When *will* producers be allowed to spread their wings at Lime Grove ?

Ascot was not only a disappointment to backers, but to viewers as well. Probably owing to the long relay distance from Alexandra Palace, the pictures were poor and the commentaries consistently out of step with the cameras. As for the Wightman Cup, the broadcasts demonstrated all too vividly the pitiful state of British tennis.

Shame to end on a sad note, but we were sorry to see the last of the present series of cookery lessons by that inimitable television personality, Philip Harben. Here 's to the next one.

" ODETTE "—A serious picture in which Anna Neagle's portrait of the central figure stands out with character and fidelity. Here she is with Trevor Howard, who plays the part of Captain Peter Churchill.

FILMS IN BRIEF

"FATHER OF THE BRIDE."—Spencer Tracy, at the top of his form, in a neat family comedy about the hectic preparations for a wedding. Really good fun, highly recommended.

"NO SAD SONGS FOR ME."—Touching performance by Margaret Sullavan in a possibly misguided film about a woman who hides from her husband the fact she is dying of cancer. Delicate treatment avoids the more painful aspects of the subject, but you must use your judgment.

"MY DAUGHTER JOY."—New version of Harry Baur's old subject, *David Golder*, with Edward G. Robinson as a financial tycoon who goes mad because he can't become master of the world. Made in Italy and England by an American director, with some of the year's most florid dialogue.

"DANCE HALL."—One of Ealing Studios' rare errors, about four young women who spend their days working in a factory, and their evenings at the Palais trying to win London's Amateur Ballroom Championship. Dreadfully hard on the ear-drums, but some sprightly exhibition dancing.

"RUY BLAS."—The Victor Hugo melodrama of seventeenth-century Spain, scripted for the screen by Jean Cocteau, with Jean Marais as another of those dreamy young men who love a queen (Danielle Darrieux). Handsomely mounted, vigorously conducted, and grand if you don't mind a few moths in the miniver.

" NIGHT AND THE CITY "—An American conception of London's underworld. Richard Widmark, who is seen above (right), with Francis Sullivan, has the leading rôle in a cast which also stars Gene Tierney, Googie Withers, and Hugh Marlowe.

★ ★ ★ AT THE

REVIEWS . . . by C. A. LEJEUNE

" ODETTE "

In following up the frivolities of *Spring in Park Lane* and *Maytime in Mayfair* with so grim a subject as *Odette*, Herbert Wilcox and his wife, Anna Neagle, are creating no precedent. It has always been their policy to insinuate a serious picture here and there amongst the trifles. There was that huge work on Queen Victoria, for example; there was the Amy Johnson film; there was *Nurse Cavell*, at a time when Miss Neagle was in the full flush of her successes as musical-comedy heroines.

The choice of the present subject, though, is probably the most audacious of the lot. Mrs. Odette Sansom, later Mrs. Peter Churchill, who was sent on a mission to occupied France, became a heroine of the Resistance Movement, was captured, tortured and imprisoned by the Germans, but never gave away her colleagues, is still quite redoubtably alive. Her story is common knowledge, for it has been written down in a book. The period it deals with, and the experiences it touches on, are still close and clear in British memory; little can be added that would make it more effective, nor altered without the charge of fake.

Under the circumstances, Mr. Wilcox seems to have done his grave duty very properly. *Odette* is not a great picture, because originality has been forced to take second place to accuracy, and even the great records of history are apt to become dull affairs when they are not illumined by the bright flash of imagination. But against this rather undistinguished background Miss Neagle's study of Odette stands out with amazing character and fidelity. It puts one in mind of some classical portrait, with the background painted in by journeyman hands.

This Odette is extremely painful to watch, for the actress has spared neither herself nor the audience in her description of an agonising ordeal. She does not look pretty, nor does she intend to do so. She shows us a woman in great mortal anguish and tormenting physical pain. Even at the happy ending (fortunately a true one) the traces of both are left in her voice, her carriage and on her face. The effect is even more acute in that she manages to make Odette a warm-hearted and very sensitive woman, as well as a national heroine. Affection, as well as observation, has clearly been at work in this portrait, and I 'm certain Miss Neagle has never done anything better.

The other characters in the film are on the dim side, and neither Trevor Howard nor Marius Goring can do much with parts that are mainly bits and pieces. Peter Ustinov, as a radio operator, manages to do a lot of things with his bit, mainly comic; but I 'm not quite sure that he ought.

" NIGHT AND THE CITY "

The optimistic distributors of *Night and the City* describe their film as " The Inside Story of London After Dark." In order to get the inside story, the real McCoy, the authentic gen, they engaged the services of an American producer, an American director, two American actors and an American actress, who proceed to tell us all the things about our capital we didn't know.

It appears that in London after dark, the police force packs up almost to a man, leaving on duty one comic constable who runs like a crab, and one young fellow fresh from training school, who has to consult Bow Street before he can take any action against malefactors. With great difficulty, when dawn breaks and their beauty sleep is over, a couple of other policemen are aroused from bed. In the meantime, the City is handed over to thieves, gangsters, forgers, black marketeers, murderers, fences and sluts, all controlled in some way by a Big Boss named Kristo, who " has the monopoly of London all-in wrestling."

Into this underworld of murk and vice there plunges Mr. Richard Widmark, employed as a tout for a Soho night club, run by a man unbelievably named Nosseros. Mr. Widmark is a violent young man with bright ideas, and his newest bright idea is to promote Greco-Roman wrestling in opposition to Kristo's all-in school. This proves to be a big mistake, since, owing to circumstances too tedious to relate, his partner and trainer, who also happens to be Kristo's father, dies in the gym, and Kristo offers £1000 by underworld grapevine to anyone who will rub out Mr. Widmark.

Instead of going to the police, like a sensible man, Mr. Widmark elects to go on the run. He runs in ten minutes flat all the way from Waterloo to Hammersmith, taking in several bridges and the new Exhibition site on the South Bank in passing. The exercise does him no good at all, for a Kristo minion gets him on Hammersmith Bridge and tumbles his body into the river; after which Mr. Widmark's young lady (Gene Tierney), who has got there by some undisclosed method of transport, wipes away a neat tear, and goes up Hammersmith Broadway with a far nicer boy into the halcyon light of another dawn.

There is one outstandingly good piece of work in all this nonsense: a performance by Zbyszko, the veteran wrestler. This grand old gentleman comes out of his retirement to play the part of the Greco-Roman trainer, and many were the appreciative nods from the elder sportsmen in the audience. Amongst the British professional actors are Googie Withers and Francis L. Sullivan, but *Night and the City* can't do much for them, I fear.

CINEMA ★ ★ ★

. . . AND PREVIEWS

THIRTEENTH-CENTURY conflict between Saxons and Normans forms an underlying motif for the story of *The Black Rose.* Two Englishmen, Walter de Gurnie and Tristram Griffen, realising that England under Norman rule holds no future for them, decide to seek adventure in the legendary countries of the Far East. Their travels take them into the heart of Mongolia in the company of the great military leader, Bayan, and to the courts of the Empress of China. The film, which also stars Orson Welles as Bayan, is due to be shown in London on September 7.

(Right.) Maryam, known also as the Black Rose (Cecile Aubrey), Walter (Tyrone Power) and Tristram (Jack Hawkins) are attempting to escape from the Chinese Palace.

(Below.) Friar Roger Bacon (Henry Oscar) is trying to persuade Alfgar (Finlay Currie) to send his grandson, Walter de Gurnie, back to his studies at Oxford.

Lieut.-Colonel M. K. R. Colvin, O.B.E., the Commandant of the School, readily gives informal interviews and her advice on their problems to the cadets under her command.

Cadets, each in turn, learn the technique of Drill Commands from Warrant Officer H. Sanders (left). Beside her is Cadet A. M. E. Marshall giving the word of command to her squad.

Physical Training forms an important aspect of the course. Cadets are seen here limbering-up before the commencement of afternoon games.

Accent on Youth

W.R.A.C. SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION

SITUATED in the lovely neighbourhood of Haslemere, Huron Camp, which housed Canadian troops during the war, has now been given over to the W.R.A.C. (Women's Royal Army Corps) School of Instruction. Of the various courses which take place here, the longest and most comprehensive is the nine-month one for Officer Cadets. The first of these began last November and is still in progress; it has twenty-five picked cadets at present under training, fifteen of whom have come straight from civilian life, having had only five weeks' basic training. Our pictures show some of their many activities.

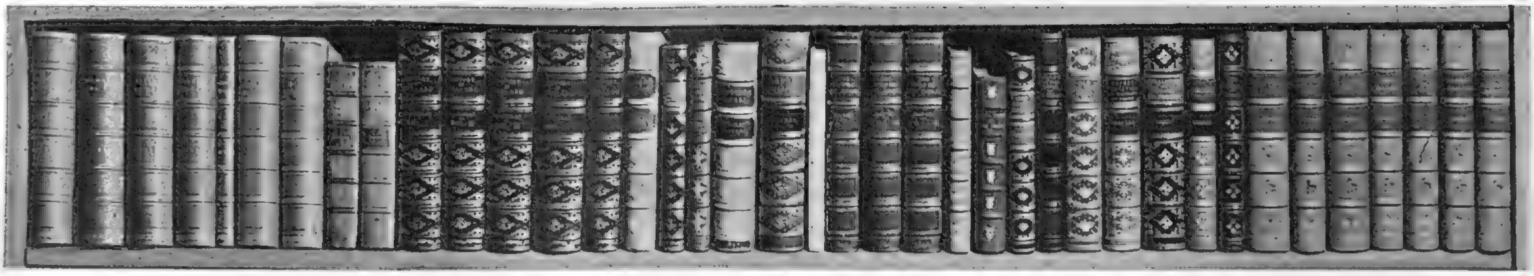
Specially photographed for "The Sketch" by Tasker.

Students take part in a practical exercise in Military Law. A charge against an offending "Lance-Corporal" is heard by a "Platoon Commander" with the "Platoon Sergeant" present.

Studying in the well-equipped library. In addition to military training the course includes many other subjects such as exploration and travel, social history, economics, and also cultural and scientific trends.

Map-reading is one of the military subjects. Captain R. E. Roberts explains the use of the compass to Cadet M. Summers.

"Any complaints ?" The duties of Orderly Officer form another part of military training. Here Cadet M. T. Floyd is inspecting the officer cadets' Mess.



OUR BOOKSHELF

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

SON AND STRANGER.
By David Demarest Lloyd.
(*Bodley Head ; 8s. 6d.*)

THIS is a simple, unpretentious story which has no great depths and no fireworks, but which effectively does what it sets out to do. A self-made American business man (Type A, Heart of Gold, but No Time for Family) and his wife (the tearful, over-dramatic, over-possessive mother) come to England to visit the grave of their son Matthew, an airman killed during his return from a raid on Germany. They find that he left an English girl as the mother of his son. The Milams, Luke and Belle, from Iowa, seek out the Harris family of Cambridge, and get a few shocks. Their illegitimate grandson is a fine little boy called Matthew after their son, and Mary Harris is a pleasant, frank, good-looking young woman who loved the dead airman and finds nothing in her situation to be coy about. Luke Milam's co-grandfather, Mr. Harris, is an ex-miner, a publican and a Socialist and, however unlikely the combination, a convincingly drawn character. First shock for the Milams is that the Harris family does not respond to their advertisement or seek any acquaintance with them, this on instructions left by their son. Next, is that Matthew's reason for not marrying Mary was that it would upset his parents. Third, and hardest to survive, is that they cannot buy the baby to take back like a piece of antique furniture to embellish their lives at home. As they receive these blows the Milams become more likeable and more real, and they finally have enough sense to go back to America as their son would have wished them to do, leaving him buried "in the soil he died defending, close to his girl, and the life of his son." Mr. Lloyd writes with point and feeling on a theme which, I think, would have wrecked most of his contemporaries. It is a pity that he makes Mr. Harris address Mary as "daughter" and that he makes the trivial but annoying blunder of supposing that a publican has his home in another street and goes round to his pub as a place of business every day. But the book as a whole shows a fair if rather sentimental understanding of English life.

★

ANY WOMAN.
By Fannie Hurst. (*Cape ; 10s. 6d.*)

THERE is a kind of American magazine story which is illustrated by drawings of splendidly handsome and well-tailored young men and such astonishingly beautiful and exquisitely dressed young women that seeing them one thinks for a moment that one has got on to the fashion page. But it is usually the illustrator who has made them like that; the author has been satisfied with something like Miss Hurst's description of her heroine, Rose Cologne: "Clearness, which not even the mirror could blur, stood in it, steady and sure. Blue eyes and fair skin were bright with that clarity, and her lips, heavy enough to be sensual, had the cool quality of the flesh of a light-red cherry. Heads did not turn to the passing of Rose Cologne, who slipped unostentatiously into the stock-size, well-assembled category of white-collar American girl, inexpensively well-dressed in excellent carbon copies of fashion's best." This young woman does not marry her good steady doctor Mark Filiatraut, in spite of the deathbed advice of an old lady: "Don't remain a spinster, Rose. Don't miss the last ferry-boat, Rose, because you 're waiting for a dream-boat." Instead, she meets and falls in love with quite the wrong sort of man, a swimming instructor named Caesar who addresses her as "sweety-smell" and gets her savings out of her and would not have married her at all if he had not lost both his legs in a flying accident which killed his first wife. We leave her wheeling him about in a chair, being violently abused and threatened by him, but announcing: "If I had my life to live over again, darling—I would do it exactly this way."

Books in Brief

HOLLYWOOD SCAPEGOAT.
By Peter Noble. (*Fortune Press ; 15s.*)
A very detailed biography of Erich Von Stroheim.

THE DARKER THE NIGHT.
By Herbert Brean. (*Heinemann ; 8s. 6d.*)
Murder story in which hypnotism is used with good effect to deepen the mystery.

THE GRADUAL DAY.
By Robert Nicholson. (*Constable ; 9s. 6d.*)
Thoughtful study of adolescent love ending in tragedy. A first novel of some promise.

THE ASTROLOGER.
By Edward Hyams. (*Longmans ; 9s. 6d.*)
A terribly clever satire.

POOR MAN'S ORANGE.
By Ruth Park. (*Michael Joseph ; 10s. 6d.*)
Disappointing second novel by the author of *The Harp in the South.*

THE BARONESS.
By Leonhard Frank. (*Peter Nevill ; 7s. 6d.*)
A very slight piece of pathos, but the jerky style with its fusillades of short sentences is often most effective.

LONELY CRUSADE.
By Chester Himes. (*Falcon Press ; 12s. 6d.*)
A second book by this clever American Negro novelist. Again a study of racialism and again thoughtful and bitter.

A TOWN LIKE ALICE.
By Nevil Shute.
(*Heinemann ; 10s. 6d.*)

A SLIPSHOD, ill-constructed novel, this, which seems to have been cobbled together from two distinct stories. The first is that of a group of Englishwomen in Malaya during the Japanese occupation. They show great courage and good sense in the face of hardships and humiliations, their sufferings are graphically described, and only at the end of the book does the author tell us that these are based on certain incidents which took place in Sumatra after 1942. The second story is set in Australia and describes the life and ambitions there of Jean Paget, one of the women who appeared in the first part. It is a pioneering tale, told in great detail after a too-obviously-made reconnaissance of the ground, and it has a good deal of this author's attractively worded persuasiveness. Mr. Shute creates nice people and makes them behave well. His favourite characters are big-hearted folk, intelligent but not intellectual, rich not gaudy, and they usually achieve more than they intended for the good of others. He has a knack of making them interesting, too, but seems to have used it more sparingly in this book than in most of its predecessors. To me, frankly, a disappointment.

★

PIRATES AT PLAY.
By Violet Trefusis.
(*Michael Joseph ; 9s. 6d.*)

FROM the very first page the embarrassment begins as one becomes aware that the author is relentlessly determined to be funny. We are introduced at once to the large family of an Italian dentist who has obtained a title, quite incredibly, because he attended the Pope. With laboured facetiousness the family is described, the attractive daughter Vica and her team of brothers, the mother with "pincenez balanced on the tip of her nose," the old French governess who had been invited to join the household after being abandoned by her young lover. Then we are taken to England to meet an English family who are introduced with equally studious comic touches, the talkative Lady Canterdown, the deaf Lord Canterdown, referred to as "her spouse," the cheeky, attractive daughter Liza, the old unaspirated nurse who says: "It do seem crool to let that pore young thing fend for herself in Hitaly of all outlandish places," and another French governess who replies: "'Ow many Jeunes filles 'ave turn bad there?" I was thus yawning before the story itself had fairly begun, and then found it to be a plodding piece about marriage and infidelity with a synthetic laugh on every page. Casting about for something nice to say I was about to congratulate Mrs. Trefusis on her knowledge of languages which is displayed in endless French and Italian phrases, but just then I came on a reference to bull-fighting and found that she referred to "bandilleras" instead of "banderillas," and so gave up the attempt. However, in nothing are we more narrow and individualistic than in our sense of humour, so perhaps other readers will find this story what it is so clearly meant to be—funny.

LITERATURE.—David Demarest Lloyd: For his effective contrasting of American and English families in *Son and Stranger.*

CHOICE OF THE MONTH

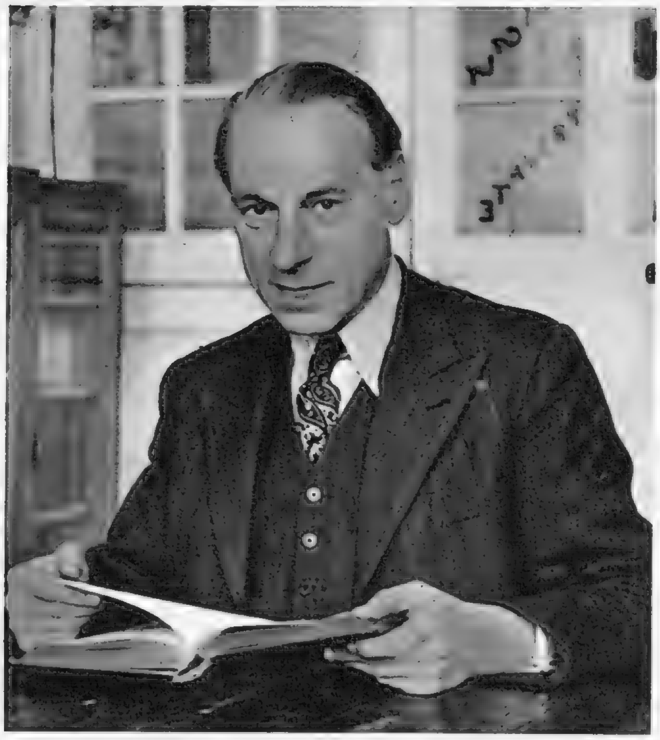
Selected by our Panel of Experts

STAGE.—Eleanor Summerfield: For both her gleaming sense of comedy in *Golden City* at the Adelphi, and her rendering of the straight song, "What more is there to say?"

J. C. Trewin

SCREEN.—Anna Neagle: For her courageous "Odette," as devoted a piece of cross-type acting as we have seen in a British film for seasons.

C. A. Lejeune



RADIO.—Fielden Hughes, whose illustrated talks on plain English have been delighting and informing many other listeners than the members of the Forces for whom they are intended.

Frederick Laws

Bedtime story from the *Mother Goose* ballet ; with Davina Shoot and David Ralli, grandson of Sir Strati and Lady Ralli.

BABIES' BALLETS TO HELP PLAYING FIELDS

MISS VACANI'S Children's Dancing Matinée at His Majesty's Theatre on Friday, July 7, is held under the patronage of Princess Elizabeth in aid of the National Playing Fields Association, whose president is Prince Philip. In the past twenty-five years Miss Vacani has raised £25,000 for different hospitals ; now she turns to other good causes.

Photographed by MARCUS ADAMS.

Practice for the *Morning, Noon and Night* ballet. At the *barre*, l. to r. : Muriel Blenkinsop, Caroline Faber, Jennifer Plummer, Antonia Woosnam Mills, Ann Martin, Beverley Bomash.

Ballroom scene, in which the little girls wear the dresses worn by their mothers twenty years ago. L. to r. : Peta J. Woodroffe Foster, daughter of Colonel Peter Foster ; Antony, son of Mr. and Mrs. Woosnam Mills ; Sally, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. Keogh ; Timothy, son of Sir Andrew and Lady Noble.

Photographed by ANGUS McBEAN.

HE'S IN THE NAVY NOW

AFTER five years as an A.C.I in *Worm's Eye View*, which he also produced, Cockney comedian Ronald Shiner has transferred to another Service. He is now playing ex-barrow boy A. B. Seaman Badger in *Seagulls Over Sorrento*, the new comedy-drama by Hugh Hastings at the Apollo Theatre. And through it all, he 's always the Cockney with the hair-trigger mind, the split-second ,riposte

Three-piece outfit in white worsted herring-bone—waistcoat, shorts or pleated skirt (not shown) worn with a classic sweater by Hawick Hosiery. From Izod of Hanover Square.

Advantage Wearer

(Below.) In the best traditional manner Jantzen make this trim all-in-one tennis tunic in easy-to-launder poplin. £4 6s. from Simpson, Piccadilly; Brights of Bournemouth.

(Below.) Pleated white chiffon—Pierre Balmain's newest sportswear material—is cooler than linen, prettier than wool. The pleated chiffon bloomers match.

IN swimming-pools and on the tennis courts battle still rages between sartorial traditionalists and the rebels. Conservative opinion goes for plain shorts-and-shirt outfits, and classic one-piece swimsuits. But with a difference. Tennis tailoring for 1950 must be designed not only for action but for easy laundering, like Jantzen's button-through style, with sleeves cut in one with the bodice. There must be no untanned bands across the shoulders when you wear that topless dress, and the new swimsuits have straps that you can whip off for sun-bathing. Some are so designed that they can be worn strapless even in the sea.

From the rebel camp comes Balmain's tennis ensemble recently worn at Wimbledon, which may well set the pace for future styles on the Centre Court.

A button-through tunic dress in poplin with shirred elasticised waist, slit cap sleeves and close-fitting briefs. £4 2s. from Simpson, Piccadilly; Brights of Bournemouth.

by Elizabeth Penrose

Tan-coloured satin Lastex swimsuit by Model Modes has matt and shiny surfaces set alternately. About 4½ gns. at Derry & Toms and leading stores in town; Plummer Roddis at coast towns.

Strapless playsuit with matching panties in shades of blue Irish linen, by Louis London. For the cautious, a halter strap is provided. £5 10s. from Lillywhites; Kendal Milne, Manchester.

(Right.) A classic seaworthy style for small sizes in a mixture yarn of wool, rayon and Lastex. These two sea babes chose it in inky blue and chalk-white. £1 4s. from better stores everywhere.

(Left.) Lightly-boned satin Lastex swimsuit, with a halter strap to button on before you dive. Made to your measure at Slikeese, 309, Oxford Street.

WHAT GOES ON

Our Puppets Select Their List of Coming Events

★ *This List went to Press last week, so please check with the Daily Papers.*

CEREMONY

The King attends the Tercentenary Parade of the Coldstream Guards on Horse Guards Parade, and presents new Colours to the 3rd Battalion on July 5. On July 17 he dines with the members of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

The King and Queen attend the R.A.F. Display at Farnborough on July 7. On July 9 they attend a Thanksgiving Service at Windsor Parish Church. On July 10, with Princess Margaret, they visit Exeter in connection with the 900th Anniversary Celebration of the Diocese of Exeter. On July 12 they visit the Cornwall Show at Callington.

The Queen visits the sanatorium of the National Sanatorium Association at Benenden, Kent, on July 6. On July 14-17 she visits Northern Ireland.

CUPID

The engagement is announced between:

The Hon. Ronald Charles Manus **Nall-Cain**, son of Lord and Lady Brocket, of Brocket Hall, Herts, and Elizabeth Mary, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. J. **Stallard**, of Glaston Hill House, Eversley, Hants.

Ashley Charles Gibbs, son of Colonel Charles and the Hon. Mrs. **Ponsonby**, of Woodleys, Woodstock, Oxon, and Lady Martha **Butler**, daughter of Lieut.-Colonel the Marquess and Marchioness of Ormonde, of Gennings, Hunton, Maidstone.

Major Andrew Rupert **Buchanan-Jardine**, M.C., son of Sir John Buchanan-Jardine, Bt., of Castle Milk, Lockerbie, Scotland, and of Jean Lady Buchanan-Jardine, of The Kremlin, Newmarket, and Fiona, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. **Edmonstone**, of Duntreath Castle, Blanefield, Stirlingshire.

Major John Keith **Harvie**, of 7, Craven Hill, W.2, and Alida, daughter of Sir Harry **Brittain**, and of the late Dame Alida Brittain.

Harold Channing **Quitman**, of 32, Kensington Court, W.8, and Jean Jacqueline, daughter of the late Lieut.-Colonel Sir Roland **Lawrence**, Bt., and of Lady Lawrence, of Oak Walk, St. Peter, Jersey.

Michael, son of Mr. and Mrs. **Wishart**, of Binstead, Arundel, Sussex, and Anne, daughter of Sir James **Dunn**, Bt., and Mrs. Murrough O'Brien.

Michael Norman, son of Mr. and Mrs. N. **Shaw**, of The Red House, Gomersal, near Leeds, and Joan Mary Louise, daughter of Colonel Sir Alfred and Lady **Mowat**, of Oldfield Nook, Cleckheaton, Yorks.

Frank Derek Arthur, son of Sir Frank and Lady **Binns**, Park Grange, Bingley, Yorks, and Shirley Margaret, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. H. **Brown**, Shortacre, Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

SPORT

RACING

July 5, 6.	Yarmouth.
„ 7, 8.	Ascot and Haydock Park.
„ 10, 11.	Wolverhampton.
„ 11-13.	Newmarket.
„ 14, 15.	Doncaster and Sandown.
„ 17, 18.	Ayr and Leicester.
„ 19, 20.	Kempton Park.

GENERAL SPORT

Air Display: by Royal Air Force at Farnborough, Hants, July 7 and 8.

Car Racing: Leinster Trophy Race for racing and sports cars in Ireland, July 8; Jersey Road Races on July 13.

Cricket: M.C.C. *v.* Cambridge U. (2 days) at Lord's on July 5; Oxford *v.* Cambridge at Lord's on July 8; Eton *v.* Harrow (2 days) at Lord's on July 14; England *v.* West Indies (Third Test Match—5 days) at Nottingham on July 20; Gentlemen *v.* Players at Lord's on July 19.

Fencing: The "Inns of Court" Gold Cup (epée) at Hurlingham Club, July 8; Invitation Meeting (epée) at Hurlingham Club, July 15.

Golf: Welsh Amateur Champ. at Southerndoon, July 6-15; Open Champ. of Ireland at R. Dublin, July 12-14; North of Ireland Open Amateur Champ. at Portrush, July 13; Scottish Amateur Champ. at Prestwick, July 17-22.

Horse and Dog Shows: Richmond Champion Dog Show on July 11; Peterborough Royal Foxhound Show, July 19; International Horse Show at White City, July 22-28.

Lawn Tennis: All England Championships at Wimbledon, until July 8.

Rowing: Henley Royal Regatta, July 5-8.

Rifle Shooting: National Rifle Assoc. Meeting at Bisley, July 10-22.

Yachting: Royal Lymington Yacht Club July Regatta on July 15; Royal Solent Yacht Club July Regatta, July 16.

ENTERTAINMENT

STAGE

Favourites

"Oklahoma!"	Stoll.
"Traveller's Joy"	Criterion.
"The Heiress"	Haymarket.
"Brigadoon"	His Majesty's.
"Beaux' Stratagem"	Lyric.
"King's Rhapsody"	Palace.
"Treasure Hunt"	St. Martin's.
"Castle in the Air"	Savoy.
"Worm's Eye View"	Comedy.
"Venus Observed"	St. James's.
"Ring Round the Moon"	Globe.
"Latin Quarter"	Casino.
"Folies Bergère"	Hippodrome.
"The Way Things Go"	Phœnix.
"Mr. Gillie"	Garrick.
"The Holly and the Ivy"	Duchess.
"Home at Seven"	Wyndham's.
"Fallen Angels"	Ambassadors.
"The Cocktail Party"	New.
"His Excellency"	Princes.
"Touch and Go"	Prince of Wales.
"Carousel"	Drury Lane.
"Seagulls Over Sorrento"	Apollo.
"Queen Elizabeth Slept Here"	Strand.
"A Streetcar Named Desire"	Aldwych.

Newcomers

"The Dish Ran Away" (Whitehall)—a farce by Graham Fraser, with Betty Paul and Frank Leighton.

"Gaslight" (Vaudeville)—revival of the murder-thriller, with Robert Newton and Rosamond John.

"Heartbreak House" (Arts)—revival of Bernard Shaw's classic to celebrate his ninety-fourth birthday. July 5 for four weeks.

"Ace of Clubs" (Cambridge)—Noel Coward's new musical, with Pat Kirkwood and Graham Payn. July 7.

Frank Sinatra at the Palladium, July 10-22.

"Rose Marie" on ice at Harringay Arena, July 13. Tom Arnold's skating spectacle with Barbara Ann Scott and cast of over 200.

"Mister Roberts" (Coliseum)—comedy-drama from U.S.A., with Tyrone Power and Jackie Cooper. July 19.

MUSIC

The Glyndebourne Festival from July 6 to 23 (Mozart Season and Bach Bicentenary Concerts).

Cheltenham Festival of British contemporary music continues until July 15.

Promenade Concerts will be given at the Albert Hall from July 22.

OPERA

The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company end their season of Gilbert and Sullivan Operas at Sadler's Wells on July 14.

BALLET

At Covent Garden: The New York City Ballet Company, with George Balanchine as Artistic Director, makes its European debut on July 10. The Sadler's Wells Ballet Season ends on July 8.

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet will be at the Open Air Theatre, Finsbury Park, from July 10.

ART

Burlington House: Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition.

Tate Gallery: Exhibition of contemporary Italian painting and sculpture until July 30.

Victoria and Albert Museum: William and Mary Exhibition until August 20.

Claude Muncaster's recent paintings at the Fine Art Society, 148, New Bond Street, until July 28.

"Artists of Fame and Promise" at the Leicester Galleries, Leicester Square, from July 19.

Œures Choisies—Vuillard, Utrillo, Soutine, Braque, Gris, Giacometti—at Hanover Gallery, Hanover Square.

Nineteenth-century French Paintings at Lefevre Gallery, 30, Bruton Street, until August 4.

Paintings by the Belgian Artist Constant Permeke at Roland Browse and Delbanco, 19, Cork Street, until August 5.

Exhibition of the Royal College of Art, at R.B.A. Galleries, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, from July 14 to 29.

Annual Exhibition of the Society of Graphic Art and the Ridley Club at R.I. Galleries, 195, Piccadilly, from July 10.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Playing Fields Ball at the Dorchester, in aid of the National Playing Fields Association, on July 11.

United Nations River and Garden Party will be held at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, on July 12.

A Children's Dancing Matinée at the Adelphi Theatre on July 12 at 2 p.m., given by Miss Dorice Stainer's pupils in aid of the Children's Aid Society. The Duchess of Gloucester will be present.

Hurlingham Club Ball at Hurlingham on July 14 (Eton and Harrow night). The grounds will be illuminated and there will be a firework display at midnight.

Eton College Hunt Ball will be held at the Savoy on July 14.

A Children's Garden Party in the gardens of Princes Gate, in aid of the Dockland Settlements, on July 19. Princess Marie Louise will attend.

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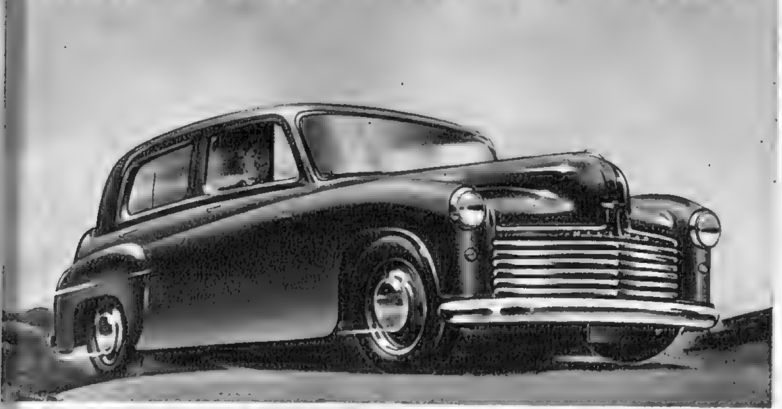

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The Odd Half-Page

A PROBLEM OF RE-EMPLOYMENT

A Reminiscence by Ian Coster

MAC and I flew out to India together towards the end of the war in Europe. He was short, tough, black-browed, a typical scrum-half. We kept getting into a flying-boat at Poole and being taken off again because of engine trouble, or bad weather, or something.

One Sunday morning, still waiting for the take-off, we walked to the nearest pub, timing our arrival nicely for 1200 hours. We drank our beer and gave—and took—scraps of information about each other.

Mac was cagey; he was on a hush-hush job, and he wasn't going to talk about it. But he wore parachute wings, and he did not mind admitting that he was a parachute instructor. He had trained a good many blokes to fall out of planes.

We got away from Poole at last, and Mac and I became good, friendly acquaintances. During a night in Cairo we learnt a bit more about each other as we drank around the night clubs, which all seemed to have, as cabaret entertainment, variations of the belly-dance.

Mac, pre-war, had been in the oil business in South America, and he was burned up because he had gone back to see his employers before he left London, just to find out how he stood for a post-war job. Some official had told him: "Well, as far as we're concerned, you've lost six years of experience. You are six years behind men of your own age. Of course, we *might* take you back as a junior and start you all over again."

Mac was mad about that. He wanted to know if risking his neck falling out of aeroplanes and trying to make the world safe for something in World War II. meant anything at all to the oil company. The official looked down his nose and said that, really, business was business. And I gather that Mac said something brief and rude, and walked out.

By this time I realised that Mac was really a parachute expert. He had tested parachutes of various kinds, including some made of paper. These tore in places and let him down rather quickly. Also, when experts said that a man could not jump safely with more than 40-odd lbs. hanging from his middle, Mac had jumped, as a test, with a radio weighing 70-odd lbs. As he dropped fast, the parachute being reluctant to open, he tugged at the shrouds and thought: "Hell, the experts must be right." But it opened in time.

I don't think that Mac had what we call "nerves." I don't think that he ever panicked. I think that he calculated the risks and coolly took them. I think that, in him, the confidence of youth (which believes itself to be immortal) had never been shaken by experience.

In time we came to Karachi. By then I realised, in spite of Mac's restraint on his tongue, that he had been sent out to train parachutists for the Burma war. He had talked about training men to jump; how one parachute in 5000, or maybe in 10,000, failed to open, and there was no real explanation for it.

When one did fail, the body was covered with tarpaulin and left on the field until the experts could make a thorough examination. It was considered good for morale to send the trainees up to jump again when this accident occurred. Mac had given a demonstration jump when there were half-a-dozen little clumps of tarpaulin beneath him as he baled out.

We went to the Gymkhana Club in Karachi and found that officers were not quite as welcome as they had been. We could become honorary members if we could find two full members to sign us in. Scouting about the tennis courts we found a proposer and, in the bar, we found an American engineer who rather reluctantly agreed to second our applications. Then, having had our forms accepted, we laid into the bar and drank iced beer.

There was a fruit machine nearby. I can't resist those things. I put thirty rupees into its maw and got no return. The American also helped to fill its belly. Mac looked on without showing much interest. Then he said: "I'm lucky at those things." He put in a coin and pulled the handle. Nothing happened—except a click. He put another coin in and, tinkle-tinkle-plonk, the jack-pot rolled out.

The barman pointed out that only a full member could sign the book to get the jack-pot. So we persuaded the disgruntled American to sign, and Mac collected the dough, paid for a round of drinks (including one for the bitter Yank), and we went back.

We parted at Delhi. He was off to some hush-hush destination. I was off to Calcutta.

I did not run into him again until the war in the East was over. We met in Spence's bar, that marbled haunt of the Services, one night, and he had acquired a nice little dachshund from somewhere. We were pleased to see each other again, and he came back to my place for a final or two.

We never saw each other again.

"Mac bought it," one of his friends told me. "It was stinking bad luck. He was on a Dakota exercise, just straight flying, no jumping. As they came back to Dum Dum to land, Mac was sitting in the second pilot's seat and one of those blasted kite-hawks smashed through the perspex and killed him."

So fate, ignoring the hundreds of times that Mac had courted death, chose to kill him in a million-to-one shot—a bird through the second pilot's window when the war was over. It was, as his friend said, stinking bad luck—except, of course, for the oil company, which could write off a problem of re-employment.

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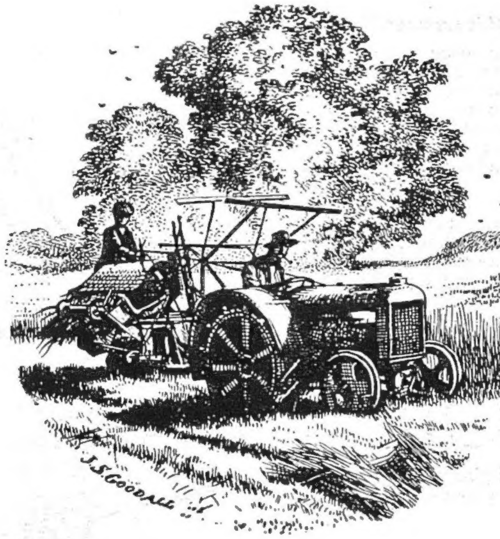

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